

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-4 (cancelled).

Claim 5 (currently amended): The drive unit of claim ~~1~~ 9, wherein the first axle comprises first and second axially aligned half-shafts.

ab Claim 6 (original): The drive unit of claim 5, wherein the center differential comprises first and second planetary gear trains, the first planetary gear train comprising a planet carrier rigidly connected to the cage and provided with planet gears, a sun gear connected to the first half-shaft and an internal gear freely rotatable in the cage, the second planetary gear train comprising an internal gear rigidly connected to the internal gear of the first planetary gear train, a sun gear connected to the second half-shaft and a planet carrier constituting the second output member and comprising at least one pair of meshing planet gears.

Claim 7 (currently amended): The drive unit of claim ~~1~~ 9, further comprising an intermediate shaft rotatably journaled in the housing and connected with a spur gear meshing with the output gear and a bevel gear adapted for meshing with a bevel gear connected to a shaft for driving the second axle.

Claim 8 (currently amended): The drive unit of claim ~~1~~ 9, wherein the output gear is a bevel gear adapted to mesh with a bevel gear connected to a shaft for driving the second axle.

Claim 9 (new): A transverse-mounted drive unit for distributing the output of an automotive transmission to first and second axles of a vehicle, comprising:

a housing comprising first and second axially spaced bearings;

ay a center differential comprising a cage coaxially mounted on the first axle and provided with at least one output member for driving the first axle and a second output member for driving the second axle;

an input gear coaxially coupled to the cage and adapted to be driven by an output gear of the transmission;

first and second bearing members extending axially in opposite directions from the cage, the first bearing member being journaled for rotation in the first bearing;

an axial extension connected to the second output member and protruding from the second bearing member; and

an output gear coupled to the axial extension for meshing with a drive gear connected to the second axle and provided with an axial recess forming radially displaced internal and external bearing surfaces disposed substantially in the same radial plane as the second bearing member.

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Claim 10 (new): The drive unit of claim 9, further comprising tapered roller bearings seated on the first and second bearing members and on the external bearing surface.

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Claim 11 (new): The drive unit of claim 10, wherein the second and third roller bearings are disposed such the apex of their pressure cones coincides with the axis of the output gear.

Claim 12 (new): The drive unit of claim 11, wherein the external bearing member is disposed within the second bearing.
